

CLAIMS:

1. A telescope operable to audibly convey information relating to a selected one of a plurality of celestial bodies, the telescope comprising:
- 5 a telescopic tube operable to optically magnify the selected celestial body;
- a processor operable to generate an audio signal;
- a memory device storing a database operable to contain information relating to the plurality of celestial bodies and accessible by the processor;
- 10 an audio device operable to convert the audio signal into audible speech, thereby audibly conveying the information in the database relating to the selected celestial body; and
- an enclosure housing the processor, the memory device, and the audio device.
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2. The telescope as set forth in claim 1, wherein the audio device comprises a speaker.
3. The telescope as set forth in claim 1, further including an
- 20 orientation sensor operable to determine an orientation of the tube in order to assist the processor in matching the object with the celestial body.
4. The telescope as set forth in claim 1, wherein the processor is further operable to generate a video signal in order to visually convey the
- 25 information relating to the selected celestial body.
5. The telescope as set forth in claim 4, further including a display operable to convert the video signal into graphics.

6. The telescope as set forth in claim 5, wherein the display and the speaker convey substantially identical information.

5 7. The telescope as set forth in claim 5, wherein the speaker and the display convey substantially different information such that the display and the speaker supplement each other.

8. The telescope as set forth in claim 1, further including a base operable to support the tube, a cradle attached to the base and operable to movably
10 secure the tube to the base, and a drive mechanism operable to move the cradle with respect to the base.

9. The telescope as set forth in claim 8, wherein the processor is further operable to align the tube with the selected celestial body using the drive
15 mechanism.

10. The telescope as set forth in claim 1, further including a remote control operable to facilitate a user providing the processor with the telescope's location.

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11. The telescope as set forth in claim 1, wherein the processor is further operable to generate the audio signal such that the audible speech is produced in a selected one of a plurality of languages.

25 12. The telescope as set forth in claim 11, further including a remote control operable to facilitate the user picking the selected language.

13. A talking telescope operable to audibly convey information relating to a selected one of a plurality of celestial bodies and bring the selected celestial body within the telescope's field of view, the telescope comprising:

- 5 a telescopic tube operable to optically magnify the selected celestial body;
- a drive mechanism operable to align the tube with the selected celestial body;
- a processor operable to control the drive mechanism and generate an audio signal;
- 10 a memory device storing a database operable to contain information relating to the plurality of celestial bodies and accessible by the processor;
- a speaker operable to convert the audio signal into audible speech, thereby audibly conveying the information in the database relating to the selected celestial body; and
- 15 an enclosure integral to the telescope and housing the processor, the memory device, and the speaker.

14. The telescope as set forth in claim 13, further including an orientation sensor operable to determine an orientation of the tube in order to assist the processor in aligning the tube with the selected celestial body.

15. The telescope as set forth in claim 13, wherein the processor is further operable to generate the audio signal such that the audible speech is produced in one of a plurality of languages.

16. The telescope as set forth in claim 13, wherein the processor is further operable generate a video signal in order to visually convey the information relating to the selected celestial body.

17. The telescope as set forth in claim 16, further including a display operable to convert the video signal into graphics.

18. The telescope as set forth in claim 17, wherein the speaker and
5 the display convey substantially identical information.

19. The telescope as set forth in claim 17, wherein the speaker and the display convey substantially different information such that the speaker and the display supplement each other.

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20. A talking telescope operable to convey information relating to a selected one of a plurality of celestial bodies and bring the selected celestial body within the telescope's field of view, the telescope comprising:

- a telescopic tube operable to optically magnify the selected celestial
5 body;
- a base operable to support the tube;
- a cradle attached to the base and operable to movably secure the tube to the base;
- a drive mechanism operable to move the cradle with respect to the
10 base in order to align the tube with the selected celestial body;
- a controller operable to allow a user to interact with the telescope, the controller comprising -
 - a memory device storing a database operable to contain
15 textual and graphical information relating to the celestial bodies,
 - a processor operable to align the tube with the selected celestial body using the drive mechanism, generate an audio signal in order to audibly convey the textual information relating to the selected celestial body, and
20 generate a video signal in order to visually convey the graphical information relating to the selected celestial body,
 - an orientation sensor operable to determine an orientation of the tube in order to assist the processor in aligning the
25 tube with the selected celestial body,
 - a speaker operable to convert the audio signal into audible speech, and
 - a display operable to convert the video signal into graphics;
and
- 30 an enclosure integral to the telescope and housing the controller.